



Policy for Managing the Impacts of Fishing on Sensitive Benthic Areas

Part of the Sustainable Fisheries Framework

**Presented at the Pacific Region
Cold-Water Coral and Sponge Conservation Strategy
Feedback Session**

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Outline

- **Sustainable Fisheries Framework**
- **SFF Elements and tools**
- **Policy for Managing the Impacts of Fishing on Sensitive Benthic Areas**
- **Ecological Risk Analysis Framework**
- **Moving Forward**



Sustainable Fisheries Framework (SFF)

- The intent of the framework is to provide for a consistent and systematic approach to decision-making to meet conservation, economic and governance objectives.
- The framework factors ecosystem considerations into decision-making.
- The SFF pulls together existing and new fisheries sustainable development policies and tools into one cohesive package.



Sustainable Fisheries Framework (SFF)

Conservation Elements:

- Policies and tools for adopting an ecosystem-based and precautionary approach to fisheries management.

Economic Elements

- Policies and tools that help resource users adapt to changing resource and market conditions and support integration of socio-economic considerations into decision-making.

Shared Stewardship Elements:

- Policies and tools to promote renewed governance and participation in decision-making.



Sustainable Fisheries Framework

Conservation Elements

Sensitive Benthic Areas Policy
Forage Species Policy
Precautionary Approach Policy
Bycatch Catch Policy (planned)

Economic Elements

Licensing Policies
Allocation Stabilization Policy
Inter-Sector Allocation Policy
Self-Adjustment Policy

Tools

Integrated Fisheries Management Plans
Fishery Checklists

Shared Stewardship Elements

Co-Management Policy
Engagement Strategy
Dispute Resolution Policy



Policy for Managing the Impacts of Fishing on Sensitive Benthic Areas

- This policy provides principles and a process for addressing the potential impacts of fishing on benthic habitat and species.
- It contains a 5 step process as follows:
 - Collect data and information to identify benthic characteristics
 - Assemble and map existing information on fishing activity
 - Assess the risk of serious or irreversible harm
 - Determine management measures
 - Monitor the effectiveness of the management measures
- The Policy outlines special measures for frontier and historically fished areas that have not been exposed to any activity, or where there is no history of bottom contact fishing.
 - These areas require a risk analysis prior to introducing a new bottom contact fishery.
- An Ecological Risk Analysis Framework is being developed to support application of this policy.



Ecological Risk Analysis Framework

- The purpose of the ERAF is to provide a framework to support decision-making under the policy.
- A draft of the document is being prepared, but is not developed enough yet for review.
- The objectives of the ERAF are to provide an estimated level of risk for serious harm to benthic attributes resulting from fishing activities, and provide advice on potential management measures that may mitigate harm.



Application of New Policies and Tools

- Application of the various policies and tools will not be done overnight. The framework and its policies and tools will be phased in using an incremental approach, and prioritizing key issues.
- The new policies and tools will be applied through the existing IFMP processes.
- Management decisions regarding SFF will also be made through the normal IFMP advisory processes, and as in normal practice, will factor in socio-economic and conservation considerations.